

Cantarella 8 YOU HIGURI

Drink from the Cup of the Borgias…If You Dare!

On the run together, Lucrezia and Chiaro endure terrible hardships, only to find an unlikely ally – who may do them more harm than good! Fighting to stay together, and to stay alive, the lovers are about to face their greatest challenge -- Cesare Borgia, revered and feared throughout Italy, has given in to his dark destiny. With his power and ruthlessness spiraling out of control, will the only people he ever loved escape his wrath?



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YOU HIGURI

天使なんかじゃない

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VOLUME 8



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Our Story So Far and Introduction of Characters

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Chiaro suffers over betraying Cesare by secretly loving his sister, Lucrezia. When Cesare discovers their love, Lucrezia is put under house arrest and Chiaro is commanded to return to Rome. When Il Perotto, under the influence of the evil forces, attacks Lucrezia, Chiaro shows up for a farewell visit only to be saved by her in the nick of time. Unable to bear being parted, the two flee to Rome. Betrayed and abandoned by Chiaro and Lucrezia – the two people he loves most – Cesare is helpless as the demon within him grows even stronger...

Cesare Borgia

The hero of our story. His soul was sold to the devil, and though he lives a harsh fate, he is a driven man with an unstoppable will to follow his dream of unifying Italy.



Alfonso d'Aragon

The younger brother of Sancia, who was wed to the youngest son of the Borgia family. He's been chosen to be Lucrezia's next husband.



Della Volpe

Cesare's loyal retainer, who looks up to Cesare for his tyrannical nature. He is antagonistic toward Chiaro...



Lucrezia Borgia

She used to suffer from her forbidden love for her own brother, Cesare, but now is bound heart, body and soul to Chiaro...



Pope Alexander VI

An ambitious man who sold his own son Cesare's soul to the devil in exchange for the Papal throne.



Michelotto (Chiaro)

A legendary assassin who wears the mask of "Michelotto". His passionate affair with Lucrezia has estranged him from Cesare.

Various cities and territories of Italy during *Cantarella* period

(end of the 15th century)




ハムレット


WE'VE HEARD THE REPORTS FROM OUR SPY.
IS IT TRUE THAT FRANCE'S KING, CHARLES VIII, IS READYING HIMSELF FOR ANOTHER ASSAULT ON NAPLES?
YES.
THIS TIME THE ITALIAN NATION-STATES HAVE BUILT UP A MASSIVE FORCE IN PREPARATION.
LORD MANTOVA HAS, AS WOULD BE EXPECTED, ALLIED WITH ORSINI VITELLOZZO FIRENZE.
SINCE THE LAST TIME CHARLES VIII ATTACKED, HE'S HELD A GRUDGE OVER BEING DENIED HIS RIGHT TO THE NAPLES THRONE. HE PROBABLY HAS NO MERCY FOR THE VATICAN, EITHER...
Sigh...
WHAT A VINDICTIVE MAN HE IS.


Ha ha ha!
MASTER CESARE, WHEN HE WAS TAKEN HOSTAGE, OUTWITTED THAT KING. I WAS SO RELIEVED WHEN I HEARD HE'D ESCAPED. THAT MUST HAVE BEEN WHAT FIRST GOT THE FRENCH KING'S BLOOD BOILING.
!?
IS HE NOT FEELING WELL...?
BUT WE CANNOT JUST LAUGH THIS AWAY. THINGS CANNOT BE LEFT AS THEY ARE.
WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH HIM, NOW OR NEVER...
CESARE.
WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?
GASP
DEEPENING OUR TIES TO SPAIN AS THEY VIE FOR POWER WITH FRANCE IS ONE WAY TO DEFUSE THE SITUATION.
WE COULD CREATE A BOND BY MARRIAGE WITH NAPLES, WHICH IS ALSO TIED TO SPAIN.
THAT WOULD BE THE SAFEST AND MOST EFFICIENT SOLUTION.


BUT ...
MAYBE IT'S JUST MY IMAGINATION..!
THE ARAGON FAMILY HANGS BY A THREAD.
THE KING OF NAPLES ISN'T GOING TO JUST AGREE.
HE'S WARY OF THE VATICAN.
TO PROTECT THEIR COUNTRY, THEY CANNOT AFFORD TO BE STUBBORN.
WE NEEDN'T WORRY.
OR SO...I SAID...
WITH FRANCE ON THE MOVE...
...IT'LL MAKE A REAL MESS OF THINGS.
TO PROTECT THE COUNTRY, WE NEED A LOYAL ARMY.
AND WE DON'T HAVE ANY SUCH THING HERE...
HIRING MERCENARIES WILL ONLY GIVE US A DISORDERLY...
...
MOB.
TEETER

I'LL HEAR... YOUR REPORT... LATER...

I'M... FINE...

DON'T TOUCH ME!

FREEZE

KUH

MASTER CESARE !!

TO... EXPAND...THE NECESSARY... TERRITORY AS FAST...AS POSSIBLE...

...ROME MUST...SHOW THE GREAT POWERS...OF THE WORLD THEIR...FINEST ARMAMENTS ...

...JUST LOOKING AT YOUR FACE, GIVES ME A ROUGH ENOUGH IDEA.

THEN AGAIN ...

IN REALITY, YOU CANNOT EVEN STAND ON YOUR OWN!

THAT COOL AND CONFIDENT FACE YOU WEAR BEFORE OTHERS IS A MASK. ONLY I, WHO HAVE SEEN YOUR SUFFERING ALL ALONG, SEE BEHIND IT.

IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...

HE IS THE ONLY BEING WHO CAN EASE THIS SUFFERING...

CHIARO, HIS LIGHT.

AND... THAT MAN WHO BETRAYED YOU MOST HARSHLY, AND THEN FLED... DO YOU REALLY NEED HIM THAT BADLY?

CHIARO'S ABSENCE...IS THE ONLY REASON BEHIND ALL OF THIS!!

AND NOW THAT SUFFERING ONLY GROWS...

DO YOU... UNDER-STAND THAT, CHIARO ...!?

NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY, I CAN NEVER BE YOU...

AND SO...

!?

FLED ROME ...!?

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHICH DIRECTION THEY TOOK?

MASTER VOLPE !?

I CAN'T RELY ON YOU DIM-WITS!

I'LL GO MY-SELF!

AND SO I WILL WITNESS HIS FALL!

RE-PORTING IN.

THE MAN STOLE A HORSE FROM ONE OF THE PURSUING SOLDIERS ...

...AND FLED ROME WITH LADY LUCREZIA

I...WILL SNUFF OUT YOUR BREATH WITH THESE VERY HANDS!

CHIARO!

KUH!

UWAA...
AA...
AAH!

WHY DO YOU...

...SHOW ME...SUCH THINGS?

SO, THIS IS THE INTELLIGENCE THAT EXCEEDS THAT OF HUMANS'.

LET GO... OF IT ALL AND ENTRUST YOURSELF TO ME.

THAT IS...THE PAIN OF YOUR HEART.

THIS PAIN... THAT FEELS LIKE IT'S BREAKING MY BODY APART...

KUH... AH!

IT FEELS LIKE MY HEART'S BEING TORN OUT...

...BY THIS PIERCING LONELINESS.

YOU CAN FEEL BETTER AGAIN, CESARE.

DON'T RUN FROM ME ANY MORE...

SHOWING UP IN THAT FORM BEFORE ME...

THAT'S QUITE A TACTIC.

I AM THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN PROTECT YOU.

LISTEN... HE DOES NOT NEED YOU.

ISN'T IT SAD? THAT'S WHAT LONELINESS IS.

IT IS NOT ONLY BECAUSE YOU ARE BOTH MEN THAT YOU WILL NEVER BE AS ONE.

LET ME EXPLAIN IT TO YOU.

THIS IS FATE.

NO MATTER HOW MANY THOUSANDS AND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF HUMANS LOVE YOU, YOU WILL NOT BE HEALED.

THAT IS YOUR CURSE.

FOR EVER MEETING THAT MAN.

BUT ALSO...

...BECAUSE YOU ARE THE ONE KING CHOSEN BY THE DARKNESS.

...HE WAS A RAY OF LIGHT CAST DOWN FROM GOD. THAT'S ANOTHER WAY TO LOOK AT HIM.

TO OBSTRUCT YOUR PLANS...

DON'T BE...SO INDIRECT ABOUT IT.

HE WAS ONLY NECES-SARY...

...TO MAKE YOU RELIN-QUISH YOUR HEART.

GOD?

I DON'T THINK YOU MEAN THAT.

ALL THAT EXISTS IS THE "EVIL" THAT LURKS IN THE DARKNESS.

THE COILED EMBODIMENT OF ALL THE MALICIOUS ENERGY IN THE WORLD.

IT WAS MADE BECAUSE HUMANS ARE WEAK AND THEY ASKED FOR SALVATION FROM THE GUILT OF DARKNESS.

THAT IS "GOD."

AND...

YOUR GUARDIAN ANGEL HAS...

...ALREADY FLOWN AWAY, REMEMBER?

STOP IT!

DON'T SHOW ME THIS!

THEN...

...WHAT OF THIS?

!?

THAT'S RIGHT... YOU SEE HIM, DON'T YOU? RIGHT NOW HE'S IN AMBOISE CASTLE IN FRANCE.

FAR AWAY, BEYOND YOUR GRASP.

I KNOW JUST WHAT IT IS YOU WANT...

...TO DO TO THIS MAN.

ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS REACH OUT YOUR HAND.

THE FRENCH KING, CHARLES VIII?

!?

!?

JUST REACH OUT YOUR HAND... AND THE WORLD IS AS YOU WISH IT.

CRASH

FLOAT

S-SOMEBODY...!

IT'S A... MONSTER—

AAH!

YOU MAY DO AS YOU WILL WITH THIS KNOWLEDGE.

FADE

CRACK

THIS GREAT POWER CAN BE YOURS.

GASP

THUD

AAAAA!!

TH... THE KING! THE KING IS...!

WHAT'S HAPPENED!? YOUR MAJESTY!

YOUR MAJESTY!?

DARKNESS IS PLEASURE. THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR.

WITH IT, ONE PROBLEM HAS ALREADY BEEN SOLVED.

WHAT WAS THAT?

MY SWEET CESARE.

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU. WE ALWAYS WILL BE.

I WON'T LET YOU GO.

AT LAST WE CAN BECOME ONE.

ONE BODY...

ONE SOUL...

THEY SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FOLLOW US THIS FAR.

CLOP

I'M... ALL RIGHT. AS LONG AS I'M WITH YOU, CHIARO.

YOU MUST BE TIRED. YOU'VE BEEN RIDING ALL DAY.

THERE'S A TOWN ALONG THIS ROAD. ONCE WE REACH IT, WE'LL REST FOR THE NIGHT.

NOW LOOK THIS WAY.

I'VE SPOILED YOUR BEAUTIFUL LOOKS.

IT'S BEEN ROUGH ON YOU, HASN'T IT?

NO.

I'M HAVING FUN. THIS IS THE MOST FUN I'VE EVER HAD IN MY LIFE.

CHIARO.

AH.

THE CLOUDS ARE MOVING SO QUICKLY.

LOOK.

I SMELL THE OCEAN.

YES.

THIS IS A SEA PORT.

IT'S ONE OF A CHAIN OF BIG CITIES STARTING WITH ROME. I'VE BEEN HERE ONCE BEFORE.

WILL WE BE SAFE?

WE CAN EASILY GET LOST IN THE CROWDS.

AND IF NEED BE, WE CAN ESCAPE BY SHIP.

I COULD DIE HAPPY RIGHT NOW.

UNDER THIS SKY...

...WE ARE COMPLETELY FREE!

WE DON'T HAVE TO EMPTY OUR WALLET.

One ducat, two ducat.

!

Let's stay here.

It looks awfully expensive.

WOOD

THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF STRANGE GUESTS HERE TODAY.

PROPRIETRESS.

THOSE TWO...DON'T REALLY FIT THIS INN.

Sorry you find it so run-down!

I'M SORRY, LUCREZIA. HAVING FLED SO SUDDENLY, WE'RE LOW ON FUNDS...

Oh, no!

I'M SO PATHETIC...

Being forced to bring you to such a rundown inn.

HMM ...

LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT A SMALL FEVER.

YES.

THERE WAS ANOTHER STRANGE ONE, EARLIER...

Is there a festival or something going on?

I'M JUST A LITTLE TIRED.

I'LL BE BETTER SOON.

ONCE I CAN REST.

SHE'S BEEN RAISED IN SECLUDED LUXURY ALL HER LIFE...

IT'S NO USE.

THE QUICKEST WAY WOULD BE TO PICK THE POCKET OF SOME FAT MERCHANT.

I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT MONEY!

BUT IT'S HARD TO BE STEALTHY WITH A PRINCESS IN TOW...

HM?

WHAT'S DRAWING THIS CROWD?

WHOOOOO

IT'S A TEST OF STRENGTH. IF YOU CAN BEST THAT SWORDSMAN, YOU'LL WIN A CASH PRIZE.

ANYONE IN TOWN WHO'S EVER RAISED A SWORD IS GOING UP AGAINST HIM.

BUT...

HIS BOASTS OF BEING THE STRONGEST MERCENARY IN ITALY ARE NOT JUST WORDS. THE MAN IS STRONG!

Not even two men at once could take him

Ha ha ha!

WELL? ISN'T THERE ANYBODY LEFT WHO'LL FIGHT THE ALL-POWERFUL ME?

IF YOU CAN DOWN ME IN ONE BLOW, I'LL GIVE YOU TEN TIMES YOUR BET!

HMMM. THERE ARE A LOT OF STRANGE PEOPLE AT SEA PORTS...

I DON'T WANT TO STAND OUT BUT... OH, WHY NOT?

THIS IS WHERE I PLACE MY BET?

HEY, PRETTY BOY! DON'T BLAME ME IF I MESS UP YOUR GOOD LOOKS!

Ha ha ha ha!

NOT TO INSULT YOU, BUT YOU SHOULD RUN AWAY.

OF COURSE, I'LL BE KEEPING YOUR BET!

OH, YOU'RE GOING NEXT?

GOOD LUCK!

QUIT YOUR YAMMERING AND LET'S DO THIS.

THIS ISN'T A JOKE TO ME.

CLINK

WHAT'S WITH THIS ENERGY?

NO...IT'S JUST MY IMAGINATION. WHAT CAN THIS SOFT BOY DO?

RAAAWR!

Ooooh!

CLANG

WHOA, HE IS WICKED STRONG!

HE BEAT HIM WITH ONE BLOW!

HE'S NO ORDINARY MAN, THAT ONE!

WEAK-LING.

THE WAY HE HANDLED THAT SWORD...

INDEED, HE IS NO ORDINARY MAN.

PRINCE!

AH...

PLEASE WAIT. WHERE ARE YOU...?

YOU NEED MONEY?

THIS SHOULD LAST US A WHILE...

HEY, YOU.

How embarrassing.

REVENGE! I WILL HAVE REVENGE!

CURSE IT!

SORRY, BUT I'M IN A HURRY.

IF YOU DO, WOULD YOU HELP ME OUT?

SWORDSMEN LIKE YOU ARE EXCEEDINGLY RARE.

IF IT'S MONEY YOU NEED, NAME YOUR PRICE. I CAN PAY IT.

GRIN

?

AND WHO... ARE YOU?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

WELL ?

THAT'S MEAN!

BUT..

...I KNOW THAT NO ONE OF YOUR RANK COULD BEST HIM.

MASTER ALFONSO, WHAT'RE YOU...?

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS MAN.

WHAT A STRANGE MAN...THOUGH HE DOES HAVE AN ARISTOCRATIC AIR.

SAY WHAT YOU LIKE...

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO YOU ARE.

I'M SORRY TO MAKE SUCH A SUDDEN OFFER.

HOW ABOUT THIS? THE INN I'M STAYING AT IS NEAR HERE.

WHY DON'T WE DISCUSS IT THERE?

THOUGH WHAT I'M DOING NOW ISN'T VERY LOYAL...

I'VE ALREADY DEDICATED MY SWORD TO MY MASTER.

THAT'S TOO BAD. I THINK YOU WOULD APPRECIATE MY OFFER.

...NO THANKS. I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF A JOURNEY.

IF YOU'RE OFFERING ME WORK AS A SERVANT ...

I smell a rat.

PAUSE

LIS-TEN.

WOULD YOU QUIT STALKING ME?

EASIER SAID THAN DONE...

YOU CAN SIT FOR A LITTLE WHILE, RIGHT?

IT HAS TO BE FATE THAT LED US BOTH TO THIS INN.

OH PROPRIETRESS, ONE BOTTLE OF THIS REGION'S BEST RED WINE.

AND THREE GOBLETS, PLEASE!

I'M SURE IT'S HARMLESS. JUST LEAVE THEM BE.

I THOUGHT THOSE TWO GUESTS WERE STRANGE ..

...AND NOW IT TURNS OUT THEY KNOW EACH OTHER.

I wonder what's going on.

YOU AND YOUR SWORD ...ARE ... SOMETHING I WANT.

I NEVER WASTE MONEY ON FRIVOLOUS THINGS.

BUT FOR SOMETHING I REALLY WANT, PRICE IS NO OBSTACLE.

YOU LIKE MONEY SO MUCH THAT YOU...

...CHOSE TO STAY AT THIS CHEAP INN?

Huh ...

OH, LEAVING SO SOON? DON'T BE SO STAND-OFFISH.

NOT AFTER I PRE-PARED THIS TOAST.

HEH.

WELL, PEOPLE DO SAY I'VE FOUND MYSELF IN A LION'S DEN.

WHY?

ARE YOU IN DANGER?

I'M SORRY BUT .

..MY TRAVELING COMPANION'S GOT A FEVER, SO I MUST GET BACK TO THE ROOM.

YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO CAREFUL.

WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?

HIS COMPANION MUST BE A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG LADY.

POSITIVE!

IT HAS TO BE YOUNG LADY.

WHAT MAN REFUSES FREE WINE BECAUSE ANOTHER MAN HAS A FEVER?

DON'T YOU AGREE?

CHATTER

Y-YES! THERE'S NO WAY I'D FORGET.

SO.

THANKS TO HIM, I LOST ALL THE MONEY I'D EARNED!

YOU'RE SURE THAT MAN MATCHES OUR DESCRIPTION?

BEING WITH A LADY, I'D NEVER HAVE EXPECTED HIM TO GET THIS FAR.

HMPH

YOU BROUGHT TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO YOURSELF, CHIARO.

I WILL NOT LET YOU GET AWAY!

AH!

THANK YOU, GOOD SIR FROM ROME.

CREAK

LUCRE-
ZIA.

HER BODY'S HOT AS A FLAME...

BUT ...!

WHEN I WOKE UP, THERE WAS NO ONE HERE.

I...

I THOUGHT... YOU WOULDN'T COME BACK!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

YOU HAVE TO REST.

SILLY GIRL!

!?

WORRY ABOUT YOUR HEALTH, NOT ABOUT RIDICULOUS THINGS.

THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.

WAIT HERE A SECOND.

I'LL GET YOU SOME WARM SOUP OR SOMETHING FROM DOWN-STAIRS.

YOU THINK YOUR STOMACH CAN TAKE THAT MUCH?

Y... YES.

THE TRUTH IS...

AH.

I'D MUCH RATHER HAVE YOU STAY BY MY SIDE...

SHUT

IS YOUR COMPAN-ION...

...NOT DOING WELL?

...I APPRE-CIATE THE OFFER.

IF I... JUST HAD THE INGREDIENTS FOR MEDICINE, I'D MIX THEM MYSELF SO...

YOU REALLY ARE WARY.

IT'LL CURE JUST ABOUT ANY-THING.

IF YOU LIKE, YOU CAN USE THIS MEDICINE OF MINE.

IT'S ALL MY FAULT...

IF I'D BEEN MORE CAREFUL...

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO SLEEP!

CHIARO ...?

WHO'RE YOU TALKING TO?

CREAK

...THIS PERSON IS SPECIAL.

I'M SORRY ...

I DON'T MEAN TO SUSPECT YOU, BUT...

I SEE.

WELL, PLEASE COME IN.

HE'S ALSO STAYING AT THIS INN AND THOUGH HE'S A LITTLE STRANGE, I DON'T THINK HE'S BAD.

THAT WASN'T VERY NICE!

NICE TO MEET YOU, LOVELY LADY.

MY NAME IS ALFONSO.

You can call me Alfie. ♡

THIS MAN... REMINDS ME OF...MY OLDER BROTHER.

THOUGH I CAN'T...SAY JUST HOW...

OH, NO.

I'LL HAVE TO DECLINE FOR TODAY.

I WOULDN'T WANT TO BURDEN A SICK PERSON.

!?

THAT MAN...

PRINCE!

PRINCE, WE HAVE A SITUATION!

PLEASE STOP CALLING ME THAT, ENRIQUE.

WE'RE TRAVELING INCOGNITO.

IT'S THE PEOPLE WHO JUST CAME IN.

THEY SEEM TO BE FROM THE VATICAN.

Were you eavesdropping on them?

THEY'VE COME ALL THIS WAY LOOKING FOR THAT BLONDE YOUNG MAN AND THE GIRL WITH HIM.

HEY, YOU!
YOU'D BETTER GET READY TO FLEE.
YOUR PURSUERS HAVE CAUGHT UP WITH YOU.
THE MOMENT I SAW THOSE TWO, I KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING UP.
AH!
PRINCE!
WHAT'S... GOING ON HERE?
IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, THAT MAN WAS SIGNOR CESARE'S RETAINER...
!

I HAVE NO ILL INTENT.

PLEASE, JUST TRUST ME.

I'M SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO BE CAUGHT.

BUT ...!

YOU WON'T ESCAPE IF YOU TRY TO TAKE THE LADY WITH YOU.

LEAVE HER TO ME, FOR NOW.

HER FEVER'S... STILL SO HIGH.

IF CHIARO WERE TO BE CAUGHT...

THE TRUTH IS...I'M SCARED... BUT...I DON'T WANT TO BE A BURDEN TO HIM.

LUCREZIA!

GO.

IT WILL WORK OUT. WE CAN... TRUST THIS MAN. I'LL BE FINE.

BAM

IMP

IMP

IMP

GO!

THERE'S NOBODY HERE!

HE GOT AWAY!?

I SWEAR

.. I'LL COME BACK FOR YOU!

THAT'S.

!

HE'S GOT A HORSE!

HE'S RUNNING AWAY ON HORSE-BACK!

BE-LOW!

HURRY BELOW!

CHI ARO!

YOU TRAITOR!

!

.....

HAVE YOU ANY IDEA THE EFFECT YOU HAVE...

...ON THAT MAN?

AS LONG AS YOU'RE ALIVE, HIS PAIN WILL REMAIN UN-HEALED FOR ETERNITY...

FOR... ETERNITY!

CHIARO!

YOU TRAITOR!

!

PERFECT TIMING! LEND ME THAT!

MASTER VOLPE!

FOR BETRAYING MASTER CESARE'S TRUST...

...YOU'LL PAY WITH YOUR LIFE!

AS LONG AS YOU'RE ALIVE, HIS PAIN WILL REMAIN UN-HEALED...

FOR ETERNITY!

THUNK

KUH
...

HAH'

STOP!

HALT!!

AFTER HIM!

DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!

WAH-

NEEEIGH!!

!

WAAH!

GRIP

HE'S PLAYING WITH HIS LIFE!

BAM

OPEN UP!

BAM

OPEN UP!!

HE'LL BE FINE.

IF ANYONE CAN ESCAPE THEM, HE CAN.

SMILE

HE'S IN A CLASS OF HIS OWN.

YOU MUSTN'T, YOUNG LADY.

NOT SO NEAR THE WINDOW.

They'll see you.

BUT ...

CHIARO, HE'S...

YOU TWO HAVEN'T SEEN A BLONDE GIRL AROUND HERE, HAVE YOU?

YOU'D BETTER NOT BE HIDING HER.

MY, MY.

HOW IMPOSING.

A BLONDE... GIRL?

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH HER?

NOW, NOW! IT WAS YOUR IMAGINATION. YOUR IMAGINATION!

JUST NOW... THOSE SHEETS MOVED.

!?

NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.

JUST ANSWER ME.

NO, NO.

YOU'LL SCARE MY PET BABY SQUIRREL.

WAH !

I SMELL A RAT. I'M TAKING A LOOK.

MOVE IT!

EEP!

WAH!

BABY SQUIRREL!?

DON'T PULL THAT RIDICULOUS ...!

THE ONLY RIDICULOUS THING AROUND HERE IS YOUR FACE.

WHAT'S ALL THIS RACKET?

AH.

MASTER VOLPE.

He's not flustered in the least!

WAAH!

YOU LITTLE!! I'LL KILL YOU!

WHA ...!?

Please don't provoke him.

SORRY, BUT I'M NOT ATTRACTED TO MEN.

!?

HUH?

Oooh, hey.

HE'S HIDING SOMETHING UNDER THOSE SHEETS.

WELL... THIS MAN WAS ACTING SUSPICIOUS, SO WE WERE QUESTIONING HIM.

VOLPE.

THIS MAN IS NOT SOME COMMONER YOU CAN BULLY!

LOWER YOUR SWORDS!

WELL.

HOW LONG'S IT BEEN? SINCE NAPLES?

Hey there

SHOCK

YOU QUESTION THIS SQUALID INN? OR THE PRESENCE OF A PRINCE OF NAPLES IN A SEA PORT JUST OUTSIDE OF ROME?

A PLACE LIKE THIS?

BOTH.

Y...YOUR HIGHNESS, ALFONSO D'ARAGON ...?

YOU MEAN... THE PRINCE OF THE D'ARAGON FAMILY!?

H- HOW...!?

YOUR HIGHNESS, ALFONSO D'ARAGON.

WHAT BRINGS YOU TO A PLACE LIKE *THIS*?

YOU, WHO ARE THE ADOPTED SON-IN-LAW OF THE POPE HIMSELF.

What a shame

OF COURSE, KNOWING YOU, IT MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH SIGNOR CESARE... EH?

ANYWAY, WHAT ABOUT YOU? WHO ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?

I SNUCK OUT TO ENJOY MY LAST TRIP AS A BACHELOR. ♡

I NEVER EXPECTED TO RUN INTO YOU... YOU KNOW? SO MUCH FOR MY PLANS.

OF COURSE, FEEL FREE.

...JUST TO BE SURE, MAY WE LOOK UNDER THE SHEETS?

I'M SORRY BUT...

HM?

I CANNOT SAY.

NOT EVEN A HINT?

I TOLD YOU TO BE SLOW.

There. there. I'm sorry you were scared.

A...A SQUIRREL!? THERE REALLY WAS ONE..

HERE GOES.

BUT NICE 'N EASY, WOULD YOU? ♡

WAH!

WHOOSH

WH-WHAT WAS THAT!?

ALFONSO D'ARAGON IS QUITE A PECULIAR MAN.

PARDON THE INTRU-SION.

IF YOU'RE DONE HERE...

...WOULD YOU PLEASE LEAVE?

YOU'RE SCARING MY LITTLE FRIEND.

THEY'RE GONE.

CREAK

IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW.

YOU CAN COME OUT.

YOUNG LADY?

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH HER, PRINCE.

WE SHOULD TAKE HER TO A PHYSICIAN.

!?

ALFONSO D'ARAGON !?

YES.

THIS MAN
IS MY...!?

RUSTLE

AH.

IF YOU LEAVE NOW, VOLPE WILL GET YOU.

CALM DOWN.

NO...!

LET ME GO...!

OW ...

...

SIGNORA LUCREZIA

...

...

BORGIA?

RIGHT ?

FAVORITE DAUGHTER OF THE POPE, AND MY FIANCÉ...

IT SEEMS I'M CORRECT.

She can't tell a lie

AH...

WHY...!? WHY DID THIS HAVE TO HAPPEN ...!?

PRINCE, JUST WHAT'S GOING ON HERE ...!?

Can this be true?

AH...

COLLAPSE

CHIARO ...

IT WAS ME... I TOLD HIM.

I FORCED HIM TO TAKE ME WITH HIM... CHIARO, HE...

CHIARO DID NOTHING WRONG.

SO, PLEASE ..

I SEE.

YOU DISDAINED THE IDEA OF A FORCED MARRIAGE TO ME...AND THE TWO OF YOU RAN AWAY, IS THAT IT?

YOU AND CHIARO ARE LOVERS, YES?

LIFT

AH!

AND FAINT FROM A FEVER TOO.

THAT WON'T DO... RIGHT?

BUT...

I CAN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT YOU ARE BOUND TO A GREATER PROMISE.

I WON'T MAKE THIS SITUATION ANY WORSE FOR YOU.

NO ONE CAN FORCE ANYTHING ON THE HEART.

UH...

AND BE QUIET ABOUT IT.

ENRIQUE, FETCH ME SOME WATER FROM DOWN-STAIRS, WOULD YOU?

YOU KNOW ...

I'M SORRY THAT I KNOW WHO YOU ARE. NOW...

...I CAN NOT LET YOU GO WITH CHIARO.

FOR...

...THE SAKE OF NAPLES... NO, THE SAKE OF THE D'ARAGON ROYAL FAMILY...

...I MUST MARRY YOU, LUCREZIA.

LEAN

!

WHAT ARE YOU ..

HERE.
CHICHI SAID HE WANTS TO PLAY WITH YOU.
SMILE
I MUST CONFESS.
I HAVE COMMITTED THE SAME OFFENSE AS YOU.
EEK!
HUH?
THERE IS SOMEONE I PINE FOR IN SECRET...
THOUGH IT'S A...LOVE THAT I'LL NEVER BE GRANTED...
SO...
I FEEL FOR YOUR SITUATION. I HAVE NO INTENTION OF MAKING IT WORSE.
ALFONSO ...

LUCRENIA?

I WILL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOU, AND SEND YOU TO ROME.

AL-FONSO! THAT WON'T DO!

BUT NOT TO BE WITH CHIARO.

HE WILL HAVE TO STAY IN HIDING FOR AWHILE...

...AND WHEN THINGS HAVE CALMED DOWN, HE CAN COME TO MY CASTLE.

THAT'S BLASPHEMY AGAINST GOD...

ARE YOU...FINE WITH THAT? TO LIVE A LIE YOUR WHOLE LIFE...!?

SUCH A THING...

I...

...CANNOT BEAR!

PEOPLE ADAPT ...

...WITHOUT BEING SO STUBBORN.

IF THEY DIDN'T, IT WOULD BE TOO PAINFUL TO LIVE.

LEAVE ME...TO MYSELF FOR A LITTLE...

...TO THINK IT OVER...

I'LL BE WITH ENRIQUE IN THE PUB DOWNSTAIRS.

TAKE YOUR TIME, LUCREZIA.

ALFONSO.

BUT... I...

...FEEL LIKE I CAN NO LONGER...LIE TO MYSELF ANYMORE...

NOT AFTER I'VE COME TO KNOW THAT BLUE SKY.

CLOP

HUFF

NNG !

CRACK

CURSE IT!

THOSE MEN AFTER ME HAVE WITHDRAWN, I THINK...

THUD

It's stopping the blood at least

BUT, OH WELL.

THE HEAD'S STILL INSIDE.

THPOS THPOS

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY. I'M FINE.

AFTER I GET SOME REST...

...I'LL BE BACK IN HIGH SPIRITS AGAIN.

I'm used to this.

THROB

FSS ...!

ORT

BUT...

...IS THAT NOW...

...WHAT WORRIES ME MORE THAN THIS PAIN COURSING THROUGH MY SHOULDER...

I'M A TRAITOR...?

ALL AROUND ME IS A WHITE... LIGHT.

HOW ODD SINCE THE SUN'S ALREADY SET.

OH...I SEE, THIS IS A... DREAM.

THERE'S SOMEONE HERE...

WHO...?

THAT'S...

CESARE...!

WAIT! YOU MUSTN'T BE SWALLOWED UP BY THAT!

CESARE!

COME BACK!

DON'T GO THAT WAY!

WHAT? WHAT'S HE SAYING?

WHAT'S HE...?

THOOM

ACHE

WAH!

CESARE!

TMP
TMP

SIGH

A DREAM...o...!?

A CHILD... IN A PLACE LIKE THIS...!?

THAT'S STRANGE.

THERE'S NOBODY HERE...

WAS IT JUST MY IMAG NA-TION?

I guess I was still half asleep

HAVING... BETRAYED HIM LIKE THIS...

...I GUESS I'M FEELING REGRET...

ANY-WAY... WHAT'S THIS VAGUE APPRE-HENSION I FEEL?

WAS IT BECAUSE OF THAT DREAM?

THE COLOR OF THE SKY...

NOW, THEN.

I HAVE TO GET GOING.

I CAN'T DAWDLE, HERE.

IT'S COMPLETELY RED, LIKE FRESH BLOOD..

Curse it!

IT'S AN EMER-GENCY!

MASTER ALFONSO!

WHAT'RE YOU SO OUT OF BREATH OVER?

WELL, WE'LL LEAVE IT AT THIS FOR TODAY. ♡

HEY, MISTER, YOU'RE JUST GONNA WIN AND RUN?

!?

THE PROPRIE-TRESS OF THIS NASTY PLACE HAS LEAKED INFORMATION ...

...AND THE SOLDIERS ARE ON THEIR WAY BACK.

YES, SIR!

WE'RE TAKING THE PRINCESS OUT OF HERE.

ENRIQUE, PREPARE ME A HORSE.

EMPTY

GUESS WE NEVER HAD A CHANCE.

Mm-hm.

SHE'S AS QUICK AS A WILD ANIMAL.

BUT A YOUNG LADY ON HER OWN... IF ANYTHING SHOULD HAPPEN, WE'D HAVE QUITE A SITUATION ON OUR HANDS.

SHE CAN'T HAVE GONE FAR.

YES, SIR.

WE HAVE TO FIND HER.

HWAH!

WHO STOLE MY HORSE!?

LADY LUCRE-ZIA!

IS LADY LUCREZIA HERE!?

BUT... I CAN'T DISHONOR MY FEELINGS

THIS MIGHT BE THE RIGHT CHOICE! RETURNING OBEDIENTLY TO ROME! I WOULD SETTLE EVERYTHING... PEACEFULLY

I'M SORRY, ALFONSO

I CAN'T... GET CAUGHT NOW.

EVEN IF HONORING THEM...

...IS UNFORGIVABLE.

PHEW

I thought I would die.

I...

LANDING ON THE GRASS SAVED ME.

!

WHO...

...ARE THESE PEOPLE?

LIKE THIS!

Heh heh heh

HEY, LITTLE LADY.

WHAT'RE YOU DOING OUT HERE ALL BY YOURSELF?

YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN SOME SCARY MAN MIGHT POP OUT AT YOU.

WAH!

YOU LITTLE ...!

DON'T LET HER GET AWAY!

AFTER HER!

SCRATCH

I CAN'T SCREAM.

THOSE SOLDIERS... ARE STILL SO CLOSE...

WELL, WELL.

AIN'T YOU A LOOKER, TOO.

WE'RE SO LUCKY!

EE...

...YAH ...!

YOU'LL FETCH A FINE PRICE.

YOU'RE A RARE FIND, PRETTY ONE. AFTER WE'VE HAD OUR FUN WITH YOU, WE'LL SELL YOU RIGHT OFF.

WE'RE NOT GONNA KILL YOU.

HEH HEH HEH. NOW JUST BE QUIET.

WHAT KIND OF PALACE IS THIS GIRL FROM?

WELL, WELL.

WHAT FINE CLOTHES.

EEK!

BE QUIET, YOU.

LET ME GO!

STOP IT! WHAT'RE YOU DOING!?

...!

THIS LADY IS TOO GOOD TO BE TOUCHED...

...BY THE LIKES OF YOU!

GET YOUR FILTHY HANDS...

...OFF OF HER.

WHOOSH

DON'T TALK SO BIG, YOU GREEN-HORN!

WHAT'D YOU SAY!?

YOU LITTLE ...!

YOU'RE LUCKY I CAN'T USE MY RIGHT ARM TODAY.

I MIS-JUDGED THE DISTANCE A LITTLE.

IF I WERE AT MY BEST, I'D HAVE SENT YOU TO THE NEXT WORLD.

SPLAT

EE ...!

EEEEE !!

.....

CHIA...

DON'T ...

...BE SO RASH.

I TOLD YOU...

...I'D COME BACK FOR YOU, DIDN'T I?






SPLASH
B-MMMMM-B

CHIARO.

MUMPH

DON'T PUSH YOURSELF. YOU SHOULD BE SLEEPING.

I'M SORRY.

I'M SUCH A BURDEN.

DON'T TALK NONSENSE.

LOOK, I FOUND THIS IN THE EAVES OVER THERE.

THIS MEDICINAL PLANT IS VERY RARE.

ALL RIGHT

NOW THEN, SHOW ME YOUR FOOT.

AS FOR YOUR FEVER... YES.

IT FEELS LIKE IT'S GOING DOWN.

IT DIDN'T HURT THAT MUCH, AT FIRST.

HMM... IT'S REALLY SWOLLEN.

DON'T WORRY.

I'LL MAKE SOMETHING TO PUT ON IT.

IT'LL BRING THE SWELLING DOWN IN NO TIME.

HE'S... SOAKING FROM THE RAIN...

JUST WAIT A LITTLE WHILE.

I'LL GRIND THIS UP... AND...

NO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT.

IT'S MORE IMPOR-TANT THAT YOU—

!

I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

THE ARROW WOUND MUST BE DEEP...

FSS ...

NNG ...

I DON'T CARE, NOW GET UN-DRESSED.

WAH! WHAT'RE YOU DOING, LUCRE...

GIRLS SHOULDN'T BE SO VIOLENT!

Ow ow!

IRK

THIS IS NOTHING.

I'M FAR TOUGHER THAN THE AVERAGE MAN.

SPLISH

SPLASH

WE SHOULD GET OUT OF HERE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE...

WAIT.

BUT, WE CAN'T MOVE RIGHT NOW. WE'VE GOT YOUR FOOT TO THINK ABOUT.

SOME-HOW...

...THEY MANAGED TO FOLLOW US.

They're stubborn, all right

IT'S... THOSE EYES AGAIN...

CHIARO ...

!

I'M FINE.

OH...THAT'S RIGHT. SINCE WE PUT OUT THE FIRE, IT'S PITCH BLACK.

ARE YOU COLD?

WHAT ABOUT YOUR ANKLE?

IT'S NO BIG DEAL

YOUR INJURY IS FAR WORSE THAN MINE!

MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE HAVE TO TEND TO THAT WOUND.

...THIS ...

...DOESN'T EVEN COMPARE...

WHEN I CONSIDER THE GRIEVOUS WOUND I INFLICTED ON ANOTHER...

WHAT I HAVE...

...IS LIKE A... PUNISH-MENT.

-LUCRETIA.

YOU CAN'T TURN YOUR EYES FROM SOMEONE WHO'S SUFFERING RIGHT BEFORE YOU.

I KNOW.

...MUST BE...VERY PRECIOUS TO YOU.

THE ONE YOU SAY YOU'VE HURT...

YOU'RE ALWAYS LOOKING OFF INTO THE DISTANCE ...

THAT'S WHAT MAKES ME SO ANXIOUS.

!?

A GIRL CAN BE CUNNING TO USE SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

I KNEW THAT ABOUT YOU, AND I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF IT.

THAT'S WHY YOU CAME WITH ME, WASN'T IT?

WHAT IS SHE LIKE...?

IS SHE... BEAUTIFUL ...?

IT'S...

...NOT LIKE THAT.

HOW DO I PUT IT...IT'S LIKE THIS.

IT'S NOT A FEELING OF LOVE OR SOMETHING...

IT'S SOMEONE WORTHY ENOUGH TO DEDICATE MY SWORD TO.

BECAUSE I HONESTLY WANTED TO PROTECT THAT PERSON.

BUT...

I BETRAYED THAT PERSON, HURTING THEM IN THE DEEPEST WAY...!

THE HEIGHT OF THAT PERSON'S PRIDE...THE IDEALS...ALL OF IT WAS SO DAZZLING...

...I THOUGHT THAT I... WANTED TO FLY WITH THAT PERSON.

EVEN THOUGH I KNEW...THAT IN THE WHOLE WORLD...THAT PERSON WAS THE ONE...

...I MUST NEVER BETRAY...

...

HEH.

HA... HA.

CHIARO ...!

I...

...COULDN'T RETURN...

...THAT PERSON'S FEELINGS...!

YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

IS IT...

...MY FAULT ...?

THEN ...

...LET ME TREAT YOUR WOUND.

LUCRENIA.

BE QUIET AND LET ME DO THIS.

THAT WOUND ...

...I WILL TAKE IT UPON MYSELF TO HEAL, SINCE IT IS NOT MINE.

IF THAT REALLY IS A PUNISHMENT FOR YOU, THEN MY HANDS ARE CLEAN.

HIS SHOULDER... IT'S PURPLE...

LUCRENIA.

WHY DID YOU LET IT...

...GET THIS BAD!?

DO YOU WANT TO DIE!?

WAI...

COME NOW... DON'T CRY. I'M NOT GOING TO DIE FROM THIS.

LUCRE ...

I'M GOING TO...

...TOUCH THE WOUND NOW.

THAT'S FOR YOU—

IT DOESN'T MATTER

NOW SHOW ME YOUR BACK!

GLARE

GIVE ME THAT PLANT.

ALL OF IT...!

!?

I'M...

...SORRY
...

I'M SO SORRY...


RRRPUBLE
CLASH

CESARE ...!?

HOW CAN HE BE HERE...?

CHIARO ?

I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!

WHERE ARE YOU...?

AM I IMAGINING THINGS...?

WHAT A STRONG WIND... THIS IS SUCH ODD WEATHER.

THERE'S SOMETHING SINISTER ABOUT IT...

WOOOO

HEH.

HEH.

HEH.

IS THAT...!?

HEH HEH HEH.

WELL, WELL. A GIRL ALL BY HERSELF IN A PLACE LIKE THIS...

ISN'T THAT A BIT DANGER-OUS?

STOP IT!

LET ME GO!

LUCREZIA FOLLOWED ME...!?

EEEEK!

IT... COULDN'T BE...!

ARE THEY WITH THAT EARLIER GROUP OF THIEVES?

LUCRE—

YOU THERE! WHAT'RE YOU DOING!?

LET THAT WOMAN GO!

FLASH

GEH!

!

NO!

CHIARO, RUN!

CHARGE

CRUNCH

KEEP YOUR SWORD SHEATHED IF YOU DON'T WANT TO DIE.

"THE STRONGEST EVER" THEY SAID. OF COURSE, THAT WAS AMONGST THOSE PEASANTS.

!

UHH ...

AAH...

NOT TO MENTION THAT YOU CAN'T USE YOUR RIGHT ARM.

YOU REALLY ...

...HAVE WASTED MY TIME.

CHIARO.

LADY LUCRE-ZIA. THIS WAY.

NO... LET ME GO!

VOLPE ...!

CHIARO!

CHIARO ...!

HM.

I WONDER ...

HUH?

IT'S NO GOOD NOW THAT THEY'VE BEEN CAUGHT.

AND HE WAS SUCH A GOOD SWORDS-MAN.

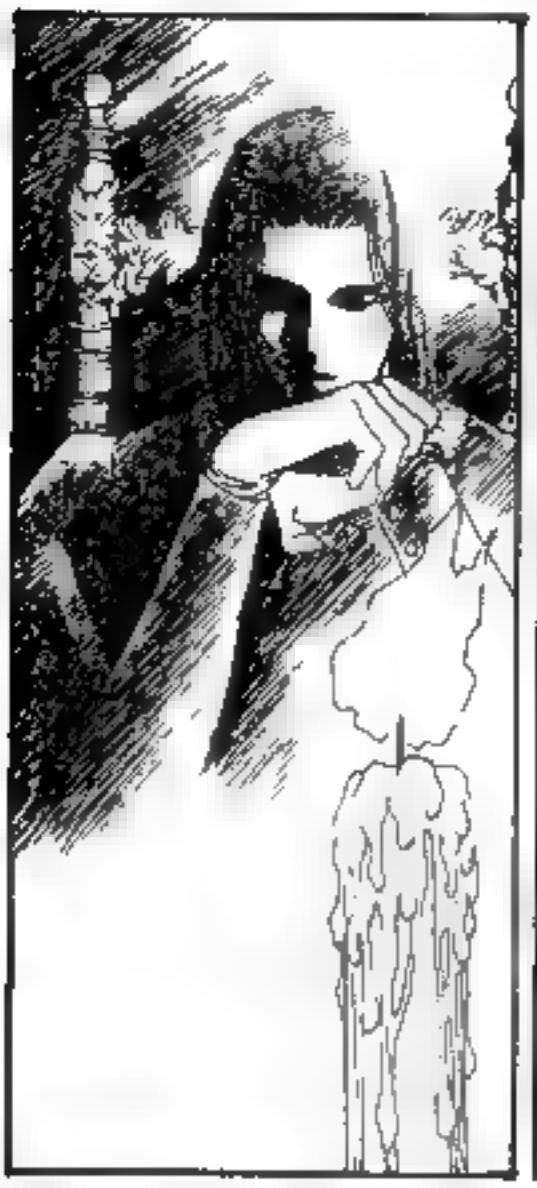
IT SEEMS ...

...WE WERE A LITTLE TOO LATE.

UNDER-STAND?

I DON'T WANT IT TO END LIKE THIS.

I HAVE EXPECTA-TIONS FOR THAT MAN.




RATTLE





HE WAS ALWAYS BEAUTIFUL...

HEY... LOOK.

HE'S STOPPED WEARING HIS VEST-MENTS.

NOW HE'S SO BEAUTIFUL, IT'S SCARY.

NOW, HE'S EVEN MORE ELEGANT... DON'T YOU THINK?

IT'S HARD TO REMEMBER THAT HE'S HUMAN LIKE THE REST OF US.

THIS MUST BE THE KIND OF PERSON THEY SAY IS BLESSED BY GOD!

EVERY-ONE'S BEEN FOOLED BY THAT MAN...!

HM... HMM... WHAT GIVES?

BUT...

IT'S TRUE THAT RECENTLY... THERE'S SOMETHING... DIFFERENT ABOUT HIM.

...IS ALMOST BRILLIANT...

THE AIR ABOUT HIM...

Heh.

Hee hee.

LET'S GO!!

HUH? WHYYY ?

STARTLE

BLUSH

This little brat

HE IS PRETTY GOOD-LOOKING.

AAAH. MY BROTHER CESARE?

WHAT ...ARE YOU LOOKING AT, SANCIA?

THEY SAY SHE WAS ALSO INVOLVED WITH SIGNOR JUAN BEFORE HE WAS KILLED.

YOU THINK THE BORGIA FAMILY WOULD CARE ABOUT THAT?

HE MIGHT BE A BETTER MATCH FOR THAT WILD PRINCESS, ANYWAY.

...SHOULDN'T HE BE AFTER SIGNORA SANCIA? OR, SO THEY SAY.

SO, TO STRENGTHEN TIES WITH NAPLES...

WHSPR

BY THE WAY, THIS IS JUST A RUMOR BUT...

...THEY SAY SIGNOR CESARE IS RETURNING TO THE SECULAR LIFE.

WHSPR

IMPOSSIBLE!!

SSH! IT'S JUST A RUMOR. A RUMOR!

HUH? BUT ISN'T SIGNORA SANCIA ALREADY MARRIED TO THAT YOUNGEST SON?

I CAN HEAR THEM! I CAN HEAR THEM!!

BUMP

AAH!

HEY, WATCH IT!

THAT HURT, YOU KNOW!

I... WASN'T ALWAYS LIKE THIS.

Sancia! You're hurting me

STOMP

STOMP

SORRY FOR BEING SO WILD! HMPH!

DID I CAUSE YOU JERKS TROUBLE BY BEING THAT WAY? HUH!?

ARE YOU HURT?

MY PAR-DONS.

YOUNG LADY.

SHUT UP!

THAT WASN'T NICE, SANCIA.

YOU WERE THE ONE NOT LOOKING WHERE YOU WERE GOING.

NO.

BE MORE CAREFUL FROM NOW ON.

WHERE... HAVE I HEARD THAT VOICE BEFORE...?

!?

WAS IT...MY IMAGINATION...!?

THERE'S NO WAY... THAT BOY WOULD BE HERE IN ROME... RIGHT?

LET'S GO HOME, JOFRE!

WHAA!? BUT I DIDN'T EVEN GET TO EAT ANYTHING!

I HEARD ABOUT YOUR ENGAGEMENT TO THE BORGIA PRINCESS.

I'VE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

IT HASN'T BEEN COMPLETELY SETTLED YET...

CARDINAL SFORZA. I CAME HERE IN SECRET.

PLEASE KEEP MY PRESENCE JUST BETWEEN US.

TONIGHT IS AN INFORMAL BANQUET.

PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME.

WELL... LOOK WHO WE HAVE HERE!

THANK YOU FOR MAKING THE LONG JOURNEY.

HAVE YOU... ANY NEWS OF SIGNORA LUCREZIA?

OH, THAT'S RIGHT.

I APPRECIATE YOUR OFFER.

IT MAKES MY JOURNEY ALL THE WAY TO ROME WORTH IT.

Though I only came on a whim.

I MAY BE WEAK BUT I, ASCANIO SFORZA, WILL HAVE YOUR BACK.

DON'T FORGET TO PROTECT YOURSELF.

!

ARE THEY TRYING TO COVER EVERY-THING UP?

WELL ...

I'D HEARD SHE'D BEEN RETURNED FROM THE MONASTERY TO THE VATICAN BUT...

I HADN'T HEARD THAT RUMOR.

DELLA VOLPE... SO HE REALLY HAS COME BACK TO ROME.

CARDINAL ASCANIO SFORZA.

I'LL BE TAKING MY LEAVE NOW.

WHSPR

WE RECEIVED AN URGENT MESSAGE FROM HIS HOLINESS.

THAT'S TOO BAD. THE FEAST IS AT ITS FESTIVE BEST.

I HAVE NO DOUBT MY WIFE WILL GRIEVE YOUR ABSENCE.

PHEW.

SEEING HIM UP CLOSE, HE'S INCREDIBLY INTENSE.

.....

HOW ODD.

THE AIR ABOUT HIM SEEMS DIFFERENT...

Ah...

SO YOU'VE RETURNED, CESARE.

I HEARD YOU HAD... AN URGENT MESSAGE...

YES ...

THE FRENCH KING, CHARLES THE VIII, HAS RATHER SUDDENLY PASSED ON, BUT...

HIS SUCCESSOR HAS ALREADY BEEN DECIDED.

THEY SAY THAT CHARLES' COUSIN LOUIS D'ORLÉANS WILL BE ENTHRONED AS LOUIS XII.

LOUIS D' ORLÉANS.

THE WORLD... IS ON THE MOVE AGAIN... CESARE.

BY THE HAND OF THAT WHICH CANNOT BE SEEN...

Heh.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

AS THE REPRESEN-TATIVE OF GOD...

...THE ONLY ONE WHO MOVES THE WORLD...

...IS *YOU*, POPE ALEXANDER VI.

I AM YOUR PUPPET.

IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU NEED...

...MY POWER IS YOURS.

GOBBLE

OH PEDRO, THAT REMINDS ME...

I HAVEN'T SEEN SIGNOR MICHELOTTO FOR A WHILE NOW.

I'll hold one of those.

Y... YES.

MAYBE MASTER CESARE SENT HIM OFF SOMEWHERE.

STRANGE ?

I WONDER IF THAT'S IT...

YOU KNOW, THE GATE WATCHER MARIO TOLD ME SOMETHING STRANGE.

HE SAID THAT SOMETIMES YOU CAN HEAR MOANING FROM THE UNDER-GROUND OF SANT' ANGELO

RUMOR SAYS IT SOUNDS JUST LIKE SIGNOR MICHELOTTO.

ONE THING'S FOR SURE. IT'S NO ORDINARY PRISONER.

THAT SCARY-FACED MAN...VOLPE WAS IT, HAS BEEN SEEN GOING DOWN THERE.

I FIGURE THAT SINCE YOU'RE SO NEAR TO MASTER CESARE ...

...YOU MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING.

!

I DON'T KNOW ANY-THING.

FORGET THE STUPID GOSSIP AND GET BACK TO WORK.

Give me that!

AH!

PEDRO, YOU MEANIE !

BUT...TO THINK THEY'D CROSS SWORDS BEFORE THE MASTER.

I WOULD NEVER DARE DO THAT.

KNOCK KNOCK

MASTER CESARE

I'VE BROUGHT YOUR MEAL.

BACK THEN... THERE WAS SUCH ANGER BETWEEN THEM.

BUT IT'S NOT...LIKE I DON'T SUSPECT ANYTHING.

ARE YOU... RESTING?

CREAK

YOU HAVE TO EAT SOMETHING, IF EVEN A LITTLE.

MASTER CESARE.

OH...THE DOOR'S OPEN...

CRASH

THE PAGE THAT THIS LITTLE GIRL IS FRIENDS WITH...

...HAD QUITE A HEINOUS FRIGHT.

HE WAS SO SCARED HE HASN'T GONE BACK TO NORMAL YET.

WHAT ON EARTH IS IT?

WAAAH

THAT WAS SOME VOICE, LUCIA.

...SAYING THE EYES...

...THE EYES ARE SHINING GOLD...OVER AND OVER.

HE JUST STARES OFF INTO THE AIR...

I SWEAR EVER SINCE SANT'ANGELO WAS STRUCK WITH LIGHTNING...

...IT FEELS LIKE WE'VE BEEN CURSED BY SOMETHING.

SH!

DON'T SPEAK SO CARELESS-LY.

SPLASH

WAKE UP!

IT'S TOO EARLY TO GO TO SLEEP.

I... DON'T HAVE ANYTHING... TO...SAY TO... YOU...

QUIT PLAYING WITH ME...

...AND JUST KILL ME...

DELLA VOLPE.

I WON'T LET YOU GET OFF THAT EASILY.

WHEN I THINK ABOUT THE SUFFERING YOU'VE PUT THAT MAN THROUGH...

...HAVING YOU RIPPED TO SHREDS STILL WON'T MAKE UP FOR IT.

THE SYMBOL OF YOUR PRIDE AND DISHONESTY ...

...AND HIS SUFFERING...

SWISH

I SEE... SO YOUR GOAL IS TO TORTURE ME...IS THAT IT?

YOU'RE QUITE A SADIST, AREN'T YOU?

HOW LONG CAN YOU KEEP SMILING LIKE THAT?

HOW ABOUT WE TEST IT OUT, EH CHIARO?

...ONTO YOUR VERY BODY...

...I WILL BRAND!

SIZZLE

GWAAAAH!!

IT'S JUST THE SMELL OF BURNING MEAT.

YOU DON'T FIND SUCH THINGS IN BATTLE.

HUH ...

THROW HIM IN HIS CELL.

YES, SIR...

REMEMBER IT WELL, GIROLAMO.

YOU...

CHIARO ...!

KUH

NNG

STUPID FOOL!

I'M...A WOUNDED MAN...

BE A LITTLE GENTLER.. CAN'T YOU?

NOT MUCH USE . ASKING THOUGH. .

IT...FEELS LIKE I'M JUST CARRYING AROUND A MASS OF FLESH...

DRAG

UUH ...

I prefer sitting

WHAT'M I DOING...?

I'M... SUCH A FOOL...

WHAT THE...? I'M BEING... SUR-ROUNDED BY A WHITE... LIGHT...

.. RO ...

CHIARO ...

A CHILD? IT'S... THE SAME ONE?

WHAT... IS THIS?

.....!?

THAT'S A FACE THAT SAYS YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE ME...

!

DON'T YOU KNOW ME?

CHIARO.

YOU'RE CESARE... FROM WHEN... HE WAS LITTLE...

NOW...I'M STARTING TO SEE THINGS...

IT MIGHT BE TOO LATE FOR ME...

THIS CERTAINLY IS...AN ILLUSION.

BUT YOU'RE NOT SEEING IT, SO MUCH AS I'M HAVING YOU SEE IT, I THINK.

YOU THINK?

I DON'T COMPLETELY UNDER-STAND, BUT...

...SINCE HIS NORMAL CONSCIOUS-NESS IS SEALED DEEPLY WITHIN...

...THIS IS THE FORM OF THAT WHICH SLIPPED FREE.

CESARE IS PROBABLY RELUCTANT ABOUT THIS HAPPENING.

OW OW OW OW!

IT'S GOING STRAIGHT TO MY WOUNDS

DON'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT... WEARING CESARE'S FACE.

HE IS EXTREMELY DEPRESSED, AFTER ALL.

PFFT!

IT'S NO LAUGHING MATTER.

CESARE WANTS YOU TO LIVE.

I DON'T BELIEVE IT...

I... BETRAYED HIM IN THE MOST HORRIBLE WAY...

HE AND HIS PERFECT DOCTRINE WOULD NEVER FORGIVE ME...

I TOLD YOU, I'M THE DEEPER LEVEL OF CESARE'S CONSCIOUSNESS.

HIS ORIGIN.

SO MY EXISTENCE...

...IS HIS INCONSISTENCY AND INSECURITY.

RIGHT NOW... CESARE HAS SURRENDERED EVERYTHING TO EVIL.

HE'S ASKING FOR HIS VERY DEATH.

I DON'T KNOW WHEN I MIGHT DISAPPEAR ...

SO...

...I SPEAK WITH A TRUE HEART.

CHIARO ...

NO MATTER HOW MUCH HE CRIED AND SCREAMED...

...HE WAS A CHILD NO ONE WOULD COME TO. A CHILD WHO... FOUGHT ALL THROUGH HIS LIFE ON HIS OWN...

DON'T...

...LEAVE ME ALONE!

HE PUSHED HIMSELF SO HARD TO OPEN HIS EYES WIDE TO KEEP BACK THE TEARS AND BRACE HIS LEGS. HE MADE STRENGTH THE ONLY THING SUPPORTING HIS HEART.

AND THAT'S WHY.

FLASH

SIGNOR CESARE, WHATEVER IS THE MATTER?

!?

BECAUSE AS HE CHASED AFTER HIS IDEAL... HE LOOKED LIKE HE WAS SHINING.

...DESPITE HOW CLOSE I WAS TO HIM, EVEN I COULDN'T SEE HIS TENDER-HEARTEDNESS.

PLIP

IT'S...

...NOTH-ING.

PLEASE GO ON.

DON'T WORRY.



AH...

!

STARTLE

LADY LUCREZIA, THAT'S DANGEROUS.

YOU NEED TO GET CHANGED.

THE SUN'S ALREADY SO HIGH IN THE SKY.

COME, NOW.

PLEASE DO AS YOU'RE TOLD, PROMPTLY.

SIGH

PANTACILIA... IS GONE...

NOW, NOW. ARE YOU SAYING A HIGH-BORN PRINCESS LIKE YOU...

...CAN STAY IN HER NIGHT-GOWN ALL DAY!?

PULL

NO ...

I'M FINE LIKE THIS. AFTER ALL, I'M NOT LEAVING THIS ROOM.

QUIT DILLY-DALLYING. I'LL HELP YOU, SO COME HERE.

YES?

UM ...

YOU MUSTN'T BE SO SELFISH.

YOU'LL GET ME YELLED AT.

Now get out of those clothes.

...I'M SORRY.

AH... BUT!

TODAY I'M NOT FEELING WELL.

I WANT TO...ASK WHERE CHIARO IS.

HOW MUCH...

...DO YOU KNOW?

WHAT BECAME OF HIM AFTER THAT?

KNOW ABOUT WHAT?

YANK

AH!

FSS ..

NOT NOW...

I CAN'T AFFORD TO SAY SOMETHING I SHOULDN'T.

NEVER MIND...

OH, I'M SORRY.

DID I MAKE IT TOO TIGHT?

THIS IS KILLING ME... SOMEBODY...

SAVE ME... COME FOR ME...

CHIARO...

COME NOW, DON'T EXAG-GERATE.

I DIDN'T MAKE IT *THAT* TIGHT...

!

PRIN-CESS !?

CHIARO... WHAT DO I DO?

AND JUST WHO WAS IT WHO SUG-GESTED ...

...SNEAKING IN AGAIN?

IF NOT EVEN HIS HOLINESS NOTICES US...

...I'D SAY THAT MAKES THIS A FULL-FLEDGED SNEAK-IN.

I WONDER...

BUT SINCE WE CAME TO SEE SIGNOR CESARE, YOU CAN'T REALLY SAY THAT.

SO FAR WE'VE JUST BEEN HIDING.

BUT ...

THERE'S NO DANGER, RIGHT?

YOU'LL TAKE ON THE ENEMY FOR ME.

IF ANY-THING SHOULD HAPPEN TO YOU...

?!

MASTER ALFON-SO!

WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO HAVE A DIRECT TALK.

LEAVING HIM TO JUST DIE LIKE THIS...

...WOULD TAKE QUITE AN EFFORT...

MASTER CESARE.

YOU HAVE GUESTS.

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, SIGNOR ALFONSO.

SINCE YOU GAVE NO FORMAL NOTICE OF THIS VISIT, I'M QUITE SURPRISED.

MY, BUT YOU'RE A HOT-BLOODED BRIDEGROOM.

ASIDE FROM SUDDENNESS, I APPRECIATE YOU BEING SO KIND AS TO SEE ME.

GRIN

IF YOU COULD PLEASE KEEP THIS A SECRET FROM HIS HOLINESS... I DON'T WANT THIS TO GET BLOWN OUT OF PROPORTION.

I'VE NEVER BEEN VERY GOOD WITH FORMALITIES.

I SEE.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

IT'S LOVELY. THE LANDSCAPE IS BEAUTIFUL THIS TIME OF YEAR. ESPECIALLY WITH IT BEING A SEA PORT...

TRAVELING IS A HOBBY OF MINE.

JUST BY CHANCE.

I HEARD FROM VOLPE THAT YOU WERE AT CIVITAVECCHIA.

WE'RE THE ONLY ONES HERE.

PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME.

...THE POOR THINGS GOT CAUGHT IN THE END.

CIRCUMSTANCES SENT THEM ON THE RUN, BUT...

WHAT I KNOW IS ABOUT THE LOVERS I WAS HIDING.

WHAT A DELICATE TURN OF PHRASE.

WHAT YOU MEAN IS THAT YOU KNOW ALL THE DETAILS CONCERNING YOUR FUTURE WIFE.

.....

ONLY ...?

YOU ARE THE ONE BEING DELICATE, SIGNOR CESARE.

THAT'S RIGHT...I KNOW THAT LUCREZIA WAS ELOPING.

BUT...

IF YOU WISH, I AM WILLING TO CLOSE MY EYES FOR BOTH OUR SAKES. ONLY...

LUCREZIA'S LOVER... THE YOUNG MAN NAMED CHIARO...

...WILL YOU PLEASE HAND HIM OVER TO ME?

AND... JUST WHAT FOR?

HMM?

...I...

...WANT HIM.

BUT, I'M SURE YOU'D SEE RIGHT THROUGH THAT SO...

SO I MAY DEAL WITH MY ABOMINABLE RIVAL MYSELF... OR SO I COULD SAY.

HIS SWORDS-MANSHIP...

...IS LIKE NOTHING I'VE EVER SEEN BEFORE.

I HAVE PLENTY OF REASONS TO PROTECT MYSELF.

INCLUDING BECOMING ASSOCIATED WITH THE BORGIA FAMILY...YOU KNOW?

Heh.

RISE

DO YOU...

...KNOW CHIARO'S TRUE IDENTITY?

HUH ...?

TO HAVE HIM KILLED...OR SPEND THE REST OF HIS LIFE IN PRISON...

...WOULD BE A WASTE.

HE IS DESCENDED FROM A LONG LINE OF MASKED ASSASSINS.

IF I WERE TO SAY THE NAME "MICHELOTTO" I'M SURE YOU'D KNOW IT, WOULD YOU NOT?

HE'S ...!?

I KNEW THAT HIS SPIRIT ALONE MADE HIM UNCOMMON, BUT...!

FOR MANY YEARS... THAT MAN HAS WORKED FOR ME.

SO...

...HE KNOWS ONLY TOO WELL THE TRUE STATE OF AFFAIRS AT THE VATICAN.

I...

...CANNOT HAND HIM OVER TO YOU.

THEN...

...THE MASTER THAT CHIARO SAID HE'D SWORN HIS SWORD TO IS...

?

WHAT ARE YOU SMILING ABOUT?

CLOP

YEP!

NOW I JUST WANT HIM EVEN MORE!

HUH?

AH!

WAIT, PRINCE!!

What're you thinking? >.<

WHY DID YOU SAY THAT...

...TO SIGNOR ALFONSO?

BEFORE ANY TROUBLE STARTS ...

...I'LL DISPOSE OF CHIARO MYSELF.

IS THAT ALL RIGHT?

THERE'S NO POINT.

...IN HIDING IT NOW.

THERE'S NO NEED TO LET HIM OFF THAT EASILY.

MAKE HIS BODY REMEMBER THE SIN THAT HE'S COMMITTED.

UNDER-STAND, VOLPE?

EVEN IF HE BEGS FOR YOU TO KILL HIM, NEVER... GIVE HIM HIS END.

IF THAT IS WHAT YOU WISH.

!

BAM

WHO'S THERE !?

I...I'M SORRY.

I CAME TO...REPORT ON LADY LUCREZIA'S HEALTH... PLEASE...PUT THE SWORD DOWN...

AH, YES.

I CALLED FOR HER. PUT THE SWORD DOWN, VOLPE.

WHAT IS IT, VOLPE?

JUST A COURT LADY...

EE...!

AH... I...

UM...

KNOCK

AH...

COMING!

FWAP

HELLO. YOU FEELING BETTER?

WHAT'S WITH THAT FRETFUL FACE?

AH... SANCIA.

TSK TSK.

YOU HAVEN'T BEEN EATING.

Ohh, and after I tried hiding it.

YOU ARE SICK, AREN'T YOU?

WHAT... HAP-PENED?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I CAME TO SEE HOW MY SISTER-IN-LAW'S DOING... NOT REALLY.

IT'S ABOUT YOUR AND MY RELATION-SHIP

I WAS ASKED BY CESARE.

HE SAID YOU COULD USE SOMEONE TO TALK TO.

SO WHAT IS IT? WHY CAN'T YOU LEAVE HERE?

UM...WHAT HAPPENED TO THE COURT LADY THAT'S ALWAYS HERE?

I haven't seen her at all today.

SOMETHING SEEMS TO BE UP, THAT'S FOR SURE.

TALK TO ME ABOUT IT.

YOU DIDN'T... HEAR ANYTHING FROM MY BROTHER?

THE COURT LADY?

HM, I DON'T KNOW. BUT IF YOU LOOK AT OUR EXPERIENCE, I THINK I'M IN A BETTER POSITION TO HELP YOU THAN SHE IS.

!

THERE'S A STRANGE RUMOR GOING AROUND THE PORTS.

SOMETHING ABOUT YOU HAVING A SECRET LOVER.

DON'T WORRY. I'M YOUR HUSBAND-TO-BE'S SISTER.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WALK ON EGG SHELLS AROUND ME.

YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY VICTIM OF A POLITICAL MARRIAGE...

I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL.

IS IT TRUE?

THAT'S...

POKE

!

NO!

THAT'S NOT IT! IT'S NOT THAT MAN!!

I DON'T THINK THAT IL PEROTTO'S ANY GOOD.

I SHOULDN'T SAY THIS BUT HE'S GOT SICK TASTES.

SANCIA ...

JUDGING BY YOUR REAC-TION ..

...HE MUST BE QUITE A FINE ONE.

FESS UP. HOW IS IT WITH THE MAN YOU LOVE?

COME NOW. THE SUS-PENSE IS KILLING ME.

NOD

BLUSH

BUT ...

.....

HE WAS CAUGHT... AND NOW I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS.

AFTER ALL, I CAN'T LEAVE THIS ROOM.

LUCRE ...

IF ANYTHING'S HAPPENED TO HIM...

...I...

YOU POOR THING.

YOU'VE BEEN WORRYING ALL BY YOURSELF OVER THIS.

I SEE NOW...

YOU LOVE HIM SO MUCH YOU'RE MAKING YOURSELF SICK WITH WORRY...

THAT'S HOW MUCH YOU LOVE HIM...

THAT'S ENOUGH FOR TODAY.

GET HIM OUT OF HERE.

A COURT LADY'S DEATH...

GAAA

THAT'S RIGHT... I COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT SUCH A THING.

LET THIS BE A LESSON TO ORSINI.

PEEL HER DOWN TO THE BONE AND THROW HER BACK TO HIS MANSION.

YES, SIR ...

HM... THAT COULD MEAN SOMETHING OR NOTHING.

SHE'S WHY PEOPLE IN THE PORTS THINK LUCREZIA AND IL PEROTTO ARE LOVERS.

THE ONE UNDER ORSINI'S INFLUENCE?

YES. WE GOT HER TO CONFESS THAT MUCH. IT SEEMS SHE AND A SPY FROM MILAN GOT A LOT OF INFORMATION.

UM... MASTER VOLPE? WHAT SHOULD WE DO...

...ABOUT THE COURT LADY?

IT SHOOK HIM UP THAT BADLY...

THEN...I MUSTN'T LET HIM KNOW.

THAT ALONE CONFIRMS THE TRUTH.

THAT THING... ALONE..

CHIARO HEY.

CHIA-RO

WHY IS IT THAT PEOPLE CAN'T EXIST WITHOUT THINKING OF OTHERS?

AND

...WHY DOES IT HURT THIS MUCH?

!

OH MY, IT'S YOU...!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

PLEASE DO NOT BE CONCERNED, LUCREZIA. YOUR BROTHER HAS GRANTED PROPER PERMISSION FOR ME TO SEE YOU.

I WAS JUST SO WORRIED.

EEK!

ARE YOU ALWAYS HIDING IN PLACES LIKES THAT?

Ch! ch!

PEEK

OH.

IT SEEMS THIS FLUTTERY SLEEVE IS THE PERFECT PLACE FOR HIM.

AL-FONSO ...

UM... ABOUT EARLIER ...

I'M SORRY.

AND AFTER YOU WENT OUT OF YOUR WAY TO HIDE ME...

I'M SO RELIEVED.

IF YOU CAN STILL SMILE YOU MUST BE FINE.

YOU STILL ...

...DON'T CARE TO ACCEPT MY PROPOSAL?

!

WHY WOULD YOU BRING THAT UP, NOW?

I'M SORRY. THAT WAS MEAN OF ME.

WOULD YOU...

...LEND ME YOUR EAR FOR A MINUTE?

I'LL DO SOME-THING ABOUT HIM.

SO PLEASE DON'T WORRY.

ABOUT CHIARO ...

!

ALFONSO.

I JUST THOUGHT I'D TELL YOU THAT.

DO YOU... MEAN IT?

I WONDER IF LUCRE-ZIA'S OKAY.

WHAT'S WITH ALL THESE GUARDS?

HAS SOME-ONE COME TO SEE HER?

YES.

AL-FONSO.

YOU REALLY MEAN IT?

SISTER ...

SANCIA?

IT WAS A SECRET...BUT I GUESS I'VE BEEN FOUND OUT.

I'M SORRY, LUCREZIA.

I'LL COME AGAIN ANOTHER TIME.

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE IN ROME.

WHAT'RE YOU DOING?

TO RUN INTO YOU HERE...

...WHAT AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

SAN...

LET ME GO!!

SLAP

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

YOU CAME ALL THIS WAY, DIDN'T YOU?

PRINCESS LUCREZIA. I'LL EXCUSE MYSELF FOR TODAY.

SANCIA.

!

Oh, boy.

WELL ...

IT'S A LITTLE COMPLI-CATED...

WAIT!

SANCIA!

THOSE TWO...ARE BROTHER AND SISTER, NO?

THEY DON'T GET ALONG WELL?

DON'T FOLLOW ME!

I WANT TO APOLOGIZE FOR KEEPING IT A SECRET FROM YOU.

PLEASE DON'T BE SO ANGRY.

YOU WANTED TO PEEK AT YOUR BRIDE-TO-BE RIGHT AWAY, IS THAT IT?

I'M HAPPY FOR YOU. LUCREZIA IS SAID TO BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN ROME.

YOU MUST FEEL ON TOP OF THE WORLD, ALFONSO.

!

BAM

!

HOW COULD YOU KNOW...

...HOW I FEEL?

...

OR IS IT THAT YOU *DO* KNOW...

...AND THAT'S WHY YOU'RE SAYING ALL THIS?

.....

THEN...

...BREAK THIS ENGAGEMENT.

AS MY LITTLE BROTHER ...

...IT WOULD SHAME ME TO SEE YOU HUMILIATED. SO...

SHE DOESN'T LOVE YOU.

LUCREZIA LOVES SOMEONE ELSE.

Ha ha ha ha!

ALFONSO!

WHAT'S SO FUNNY, YOU DAMN CHILD!?

HEH...

AH... HA HA HA!

PFFT

... BEFORE THAT HAP-PENS ...

MY HEART IS BOUND TO YOU, OH SELFISH PRINCESS.

NO MARRIAGE CAN CHANGE THAT.

PLEASE ...

...DON'T WORRY.

BAM

Hmph! 9

OOOF ...

OH?

THEN I'M WRONG?

YANK

WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN!? YOU'RE MAKING IT SOUND LIKE I'M JEALOUS OR SOMETHING!

Let go of my dress!

WHAT IS WITH HIM? SINCE LONG AGO...

...HE'S ALWAYS LOOKED LIKE HE KNOWS EVERYTHING...!

I HATE THAT PROUD FACE!

IN THE END, WAS I THE BROKEN TOY...?

HUH

I KNOW HOW EVER SINCE YOU WERE A CHILD ...

...IF YOU WANTED SOMEONE, YOU'D NEVER GIVE UP ON THEM EVEN IF YOU WERE REDUCED TO AN ABANDONED TOY.

!

IT'S GOOD WEATHER TODAY.

AND THAT GLOOMY GUY'S GONE OFF SOME-WHERE.

!?

LUCRE-ZIA.

HEY.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, LUCREZIA? YOU DON'T FEEL WELL?

UUH ...

UUEEH ...!

!?

DON'T TELL ME... YOU'RE...

SPLASH

BEAU-
TIFUL...

IF I'M NOT MIS-TAKEN ...

...YOU'RE "DEMONIC" RIGHT? IT'S TIMES LIKE THESE THAT I BELIEVE IT.

YOU...

...AREN'T AFRAID OF ME? SANCIA.

YOU'RE A NATURAL-BORN HARLOT.

COME HERE.

I'M USED TO IT BY NOW.

ANYWAY, YOUR CHARM OVERRULES IT.

IT'S ABOUT YOUR BELOVED SISTER.

I...

...HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU.

IT SEEMS SHE'S WITH CHILD.

WELL, NOW!

YOU'RE NOT SURPRISED IN THE LEAST.

YOU... SEEM HAPPY ABOUT THAT.

DO I?

BUT IT'S TOO BAD. NOW SHE CAN'T MARRY ALFONSO.

THAT'S IRRELE-VANT.

HUH?

IF YOU KEEP QUIET ABOUT THIS...

...AND ENOUGH TIME PASSES... NOBODY... WILL EVER KNOW ANYTHING.

SANCIA.

BUT...

I...

...DON'T WANT TO KILL YOU.

IT'S SO COLD CAMPING DOWN HERE, SO THIS IS A GREAT ARRANGE-MENT.

AND YOU'RE SUCH A BEAUTIFUL GAL TOO . .

NEAR

IF I GET ANY MORE DRUNK I WON'T BE ABLE TO DO MY JOB.

NOOO NO NO.

MY.

WHY NOT JUST A LITTLE MORE?

WHUMP

BASH

ACCORDING TO THIS INFORMATION... THERE SHOULD BE AN ISOLATED CELL DOWN HERE.

!

WHERE'D YOU GET THAT MAP?

SOB SOB

Am I really that beautiful?

NO. IT WAS NOTH-ING.

Phew

WE WERE LUCKY TONIGHT'S GUARD IS SUCH A GOOD SPORT.

GOOD WORK, ENRIQUE.

WHEN YOU TRAVEL AS MUCH AS I DO, YOU LEARN HOW TO FIND THINGS OUT.

TMP TMP

NOW, LET'S HURRY, ENRIQUE.

YOU REALLY ARE SOMETHING...

You're so crafty.

CHIARO.

ARE YOU IN THERE, CHIARO?

SOMEONE'S... CALLING ME...

BUT WHO...?

I...CAN'T MOVE MY BODY...

THANK GOODNESS YOU'RE ALIVE.

CHIA-RO!

!

UUH...

THIS IS AWFUL...

SNEAK

SNORE

OKAY.

BE PATIENT JUST A LITTLE LONGER.

ONCE WE REACH AN INN, WE'LL TEND TO YOUR WOUNDS.

ANGLE

AL... FON... SO?

WHY?

I TOLD YOU.

I NEED YOUR STRENGTH.

FOR NOW...

...JUST CONCENTRATE ON SURVIVING.

DON'T TALK... YOU'LL HURT YOUR THROAT.

I...

...MIGHT NO LONGER BE...WHAT YOU'D HOPED FOR.

HE'S IN TERRIBLE SHAPE.

WELL, I WON'T ASK TOO MANY QUESTIONS.

I'M JUST A HUMBLE TOWN DOCTOR. I CAN'T RISK GETTING INVOLVED.

HE WAS KEPT ALIVE, BUT WHY?

BUT... WHOEVER TORTURED HIM WAS CAUTIOUS.

WITH THAT ARROW WOUND, HIS RIGHT ARM IS IN NECROSIS.

ALL WE CAN DO IS AMPUTATE IT.

IN RETURN, I'LL RAISE YOUR PAYMENT.

THAT'S VERY WISE, DOCTOR.

THAT'S TOO BAD. WE'RE JUST ABOUT TO START YOUR SURGERY.

YOU'RE AWAKE ?

UUH ...

NN...

YOU ENDURED SEVERE TORTURE.

IT MIGHT HURT A LITTLE BUT...

...YOU CAN TAKE IT.

!

AFTERWARD, GET PLENTY OF REST.

GO TO NAPLES...OR SQUALLICE, WHERE THERE'S SUN.

SQUALLICE IS WHERE I WAS BORN.

IT'S A WARM PLACE NEAR THE MEDITER-RANEAN.

THE OCEAN IS BLUE AND SPARKLES... AND THE SUN NEVER STOPS SHINING...

BUT... I...

MY SINCEREST APOLOGIES.

IT SEEMS HE HAD SOME GUIDANCE.

HE COULD NOT HAVE GOTTEN THIS FAR ON HIS OWN...

WHEN WILL I BE ABLE TO...

...FIND SOME ANSWER TO THIS PAIN?

HE'S SMILING?

!

SIGNOR CHIARO.

IF YOU STAND THERE, YOU'LL BE SPOTTED.

PLEASE

...COME QUICKLY.

LET HIM...

...TAKE HIS TIME A LITTLE, ENRIQUE.

I WON'T... LET YOU GET AWAY.

NO MATTER ...

...WHERE YOU GO...

...YOU... ARE BOUND TO ME!

TO BE CONTINUED IN CANTARELLA VOL.9



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WEDDING BELLS HERALD JOY...

...CELEBRATION...

...AND TERROR.



Cantarella

Volume Nine on sale soon

AUTHOR'S NOTE



The other day I went to an Italian restaurant and looked at the map of Italy they had inside. I found myself muttering, "Here's Calabria, and here's Umbria..." I was saying the names of the nation-states. Does this count as an occupational disease!?

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